



The Quester

**Fairfield Grace United
Methodist Church**



Feb 2018

A Message from Pastor Cho:

To my sisters and brothers in Christ at Fairfield Grace:

God is good! All the time!

Invitation I (a letter from Karen Price, Sunday School Superintendent)

Dear Fairfield Grace Family and Friends,

I invite you to be in prayer for our five confirmation candidates,.

Each month I am going to have a casual breakfast and practical faith chat with them. As Sunday school Superintendent, it is sad that we lose the participation of our middle and high school students. The challenges and difficulties of the teen years could better be met with a faith connection. I don't have answers, but only the heartfelt desire that our young people find meaning in being a part of Fairfield Grace. If you have ideas or would like to volunteer for our monthly meetings, please let me know.

In Christ's Love,

Karen Price

Please pray for our
2018 Confirmation Candidates
and their Mentors

Micaela Ditgen-Jaramillo (mentor: Katie White)

Jon Gladstone (mentor: Dennis Robb)

Maggie Price (mentor: Patty Jurgielewicz)

Grayson Rush (mentor: Kim Peters)

Harrison Spangler (mentor: David Spangler)



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Invitation II

We are entering the Lenten season this month. February 14 is Ash Wednesday, the first day of Lent. There will be Taizé Ash Wednesday services at 9:30 am and 7 pm in the Sanctuary. Join me to take the first step in the Lenten journey.

Lent is a season of repentance and renewal. Knowing that praying and fasting have been long-time Lenten spiritual disciplines, I proclaim that we pray and fast every Wednesday morning during the 40 days of Lent, not including Sundays. As you know, we have been praying together since last September for the vital growth of our church mission and ministry every Wednesday at 9:30 am. During Lent, we simply add one more spiritual discipline to our congregational prayer life- fasting for a morning meal once weekly. We do it intentionally to pray as if everything depends on God. On Easter Sunday, we will present our fasting offering, which will be designated to help our hungry neighbors.

Invitation III

Have you heard about Centering Prayer? What is it? “It is based on the wisdom saying of Jesus in the sermon on the Mount: “... But when you pray go to your inner room, close the door and pray to your Father in secret. And your father, who sees in secret, will reward you.” (Matthew 6:6) It will help us deepening our relationship with God. I invite you to join me to practice two 20 – 30 minute periods of Centering Prayer daily.

Centering Prayer Guidelines

1. Choose a sacred word as the symbol of your intention to consent to God’s presence and action within. Use a word of one or two syllables, such as: God, Jesus, Abba, Father, Mother, Amen. Other possibilities include: Love, Peace, Let Go.
2. Sitting comfortably and with eyes closed, settle briefly and silently introduce the sacred word as the symbol of your consent to God’s presence and action within.
3. When engaged with your thoughts, which include body sensations, feelings, images, and reflections, return ever-so-gently to the sacred word.
4. At the end of the prayer period, remain in silence with eyes closed for a couple of minutes. I hope you enjoy staying in touch with God, being touched and molded anew every day.

Blessings,

Kun Sam, your M&M partner

*please note: a brochure on Centering Prayer is included in this issue of the Quester on pages 18-21

Lectionary Readings

Feb 4: Isa 40:21-31; Ps 147:1-11, 20c; 1 Corinthians 9:16-23; Mark 1:29-39

Feb 11: 2 Kings 2:1-12; Psalm 50:1-6; 2 Corinthians 4:3-6; Mark 9:2-9

Feb 14, Ash Wednesday: Joel 2:1-2, 12-17; Psalm 51:1-17; 2

Corinthians 5:20b-6:10; Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21

Feb 18: Genesis 9:8-17; Psalm 25:1-10; 1 Peter 3:18-22; Mark 1:9-15

Feb 25: Genesis 17:1-7, 15-16; Ps 22:23-31; Romans 4:13-25; Mark 8:31-38

Reflections by Larry Campana

Pastor Cho has asked new member, Larry Campana, to share his thoughts as he and his wife, Kelly Barrett, are welcomed as members to Fairfield Grace and their son, Watson, was recently baptized.

Reflection 1:

Thank you to Pastor Cho and the entire Community at Fairfield Grace UMC for your warmth and support during the recent Baptism of our son, Watson Campana. Our family traveled from New York, Ohio, and Seattle to attend the service. Our family felt like welcomed guests. They all commented on how uplifting and beautiful the ceremony was and it was a special treat to have the bell choir perform.

During the same service, we both became members of the church. With the speed of information in today's age, it can be very easy to become a "member". Every time we make an online purchase, we are offered to join a loyalty club or an email newsletter. Still, becoming a member and actively participating in a community are two different things. During the past few months that we have attended Fairfield Grace, we were impressed with the energy and engagement of its members. We knew on our first visit that we had found a home and now are looking forward to continuing our active participation.

Reflection 2:

A few weeks ago, Pastor Dayfly spoke during service, saying that a church member came to visit him at Panera and asked the Pastor if he would like to speak about himself. The story had an effect on me that has been on my mind ever since.

Firstly, the act and the thought behind the act was so kind. It is inspiring to know that one of our Fairfield Grace members thought to ask Pastor Dayfly if he would like support, after he offers all of us support so often. This would not have occurred to me, mostly because I was not looking for the opportunity to be of service. Since hearing the story, I have looked for opportunities to be of service.

In addition, I assume that the discussion that day at Panera was beneficial for both Pastor Dayfly as well as the member. I have begun to ask myself if I could benefit from changing my role or perspective. For example, I can be so focused in my role as a father, but what can I learn from my son if I take a moment to pay attention? I am sure many of us could benefit from a change in perspective in our positions as boss, student, leader, parent, etc. Since hearing the story, I have looked for opportunities to change my perspective and learn something new.

Ushers

Team #1

Ed Stock

Charlie Morris

Art Thomas

Bob Watson

Fellowship Hour

Feb 4: *Wesley Circle*

Feb 11: *Scout Troop 88*

Feb 18: *Wesley Circle*

Feb 25: *Wesley Circle*

*Please contact Georgina at gholdsworpth@optimum.net or
203-335-7129 If you (or you and a friend) can organize coffee hour*

Worship Leaders

Feb 4: *Sheila Muscott*

Feb 11: *Scout Sunday*

Feb 18: *Georgina Holdsworth*

Feb 25: *Martha Wood*

Sunday School Teachers

Feb 4: *Judy Vindheim and Patty Jurgeliewicz*

Feb 11: *Franklyn McLean and Cindy Block*

Feb 18: *Nubia Jaramillo-Pennell and Bill Miller*

Feb 25: *Katie White and Eric Monkman*

Week of:

Pray for Fairfield Grace Families

Feb 4: Diane Kiraly, Ann Kisseberth and Michelle Krancz

Feb 11: Kristy family, Ingrid Lacoste and Leah Larsen

Feb 18: Ruth Lasko, LaVista family and Jaedoo Lee

Feb 25: Leppla family, Llewellyn family and Lopes family

February Birthdays

01 Sook Hyun Kim
01 Sean Mizoguchi
02 GeeHee Park
02 Andrew Jurgielewicz
03 Kimberly Spangler
06 Jim Wood

08 Won Aeh Choi
09 Jim Conroy
09 Kristina Joukhadar
10 David Harrison
11 Yubin Yi
14 Craig Michelson

14 Alexander Tang
15 Jenna Michelson
15 Marion Prescott
18 Cynthia Peck-Humphrey
19 Joseph Dowgiallo
20 Felix Beriguete
24 Steve Lopes
26 Maggie Price
26 Elizabeth Sweeney
27 Dorothy Patterson
28 Robert Bedson
28 Daniel Vindheim

February Anniversaries

Feb 07 Carol and Bob Watson 59 years

Fairfield Grace Pictorial Directory

February 9, 10 and 11

All in the Fairfield Grace Congregation are encouraged to participate. This directory will increase communication among our members and continue to unite and engage more of our congregation.

Our goal is to have at least 60 families involved.

We are confident that we can do so.

All participants will receive 1 complimentary 8x10 photo, access to an online directory and have the choice to purchase more photos at a discount if they choose to do so at their appointment.

The photography dates will be as follows:

Friday, 2/9: 2:00 pm - 9:00 pm
Saturday, 2/10: 10:00 am - 5:00 pm
Sunday, 2/11: 11:30 am - 5:30 pm

Participants should arrive 15 minutes prior to their appointment and should expect to be there for 45 minutes.

Alan Stewart, Fellowship Team Leader, will have sign ups available at Sunday Services.

IF YOU HAVE NOT SCHEDULED YOUR SESSION YET,

please contact Alan Stewart at






astewart@ybrealty.com or 203-275-6084



DISTRICT RESOURCE DAY WORKSHOPS 2018

Saturday, February 3rd 9 to 12:00 p.m. @ Simsbury UMC

Sunday, February 11th 2 to 5:00 p.m. @ Stratford UMC

	SPR 101 A basic overview of the role of the Staff-Parish Relations Committee in the local church, along with an update on the Bishop's procedures on appointment-making. <i>Led by CT District Superintendent, Rev. Dr. Alpher Sylvester.</i>
	The Changing Face of Youth and Student Ministries Our Teens seem to be busier than ever, and with their demanding schedules it seems increasingly difficult to find the best ways (and times) to engage them. Many of us are finding that a one-size-fits-all approach to ministry is yielding diminishing returns. Join us as we share ideas about what we can do and what programming changes we can make to accommodate these changing times. <i>Led by Peter Preiser, Assistant Pastor and Director of Youth & Student Ministries, Simsbury UMC, and Herron Gaston, Pastor, Summerfield UMC, Bridgeport, CT.</i>
	Parish Development All you need to know about Parish Development (DIMCHEX) Loans and Grants for your church. <i>Led by Rev. David Mantz, our CT District Chairperson and past Chair of the Conference Committee!</i>
	Re-Purposing Church Property From a case study perspective, the presenters will facilitate a conversation concerning the possibilities and challenges of re-purposing church property for the sake of ministry. <i>Led by Dr. Stephen Bauman and Ms. Holly Fogle, Leadership Council Chair, Christ Church, New York City. (Stratford only)</i>
	Six Thinking Hats The Six Thinking Hats technique of Edward de Bono is a process that can be used for exploring different perspectives towards a complex situation or challenge. Deb Clifford will introduce us to this simple, effective process that helps people be more productive, focused, and mindfully involved. It is a powerful tool set which, once learned, can be applied immediately. <i>Led by Ms. Deb Clifford, Simsbury UMC.</i>

Continued on next page...

Please plan to attend for a time of information, inspiration, and interaction.

Note from Ed Schindler (203-371-5068 or ed.schindler@gmail.com)







Troop 88 is hosting a Congregational Meal after the service
on Feb 11, the second workshop date.

Stay for lunch and we can carpool to the workshop in Stratford at 1:30.

DISTRICT RESOURCE DAY WORKSHOPS 2018

Saturday, February 3rd 9 to 12:00 p.m. @ Simsbury UMC

Sunday, February 11th 2 to 5:00 p.m. @ Stratford UMC

	<p>Life-Changing Mission Trips Life Changing Mission Trips - What are they? How do you do them? What are the secrets of success? How do you pay for them? Help from a 30-year veteran, first as laity and now a Pastor. <i>Led by Rev. David Mantz, Watertown UMC.</i></p>
	<p>Sanctuary Church Is your church considering offering sanctuary to undocumented immigrants facing deportation? Or would you like to learn other ways to support immigrants? Come to this workshop organized by Rev. Paul Fleck, Pastor of Hamden Plains UMC and a member of the Conference Immigration Task Force. The February 11 workshop will also feature Rev. Juhye Hahn sharing her experience as a pastor who has hosted two guests in sanctuary at First and Summerfield UMC in New Haven. <i>Led by Rev. Paul Fleck, Hamden Plains UMC.</i></p>
	<p>Church Finances A discussion on Church Finances including the most frequently asked questions of the Conference Center office. Topics will include taxes, budgeting, auditing, apportionments and clergy benefits, along with others. <i>Led by Mr. Ross Williams, Chief Financial Officer for the New York Annual Conference (Simsbury only) and Ms. Diana Moore, NYAC Conference Controller. (Stratford only)</i></p>
	<p>What's New and What's Next at the Intersection of Faith and Culture This workshop borrows its title and some of its content from the 2018 Barna Trends Publication, which is an annual guide produced by Barna Group, a visionary research and communications company. The first part of our time together will present a summary of some cultural, religious, and political trends in our society that are impacting the way churches do ministry. The second half of the hour will be an open discussion about what we are doing, and might be able to do, in terms of strategies and methodologies, to maintain our relevance and "reimagine" our ministries in a rapidly changing culture. <i>Led by Peter Preiser, Assistant Pastor and Director of Youth & Student Ministries, Simsbury United Methodist Church, Pastor, West Granby United Methodist Church.</i></p>
	<p>Stewardship – What It Is and What It Is Not This innovative, actions-based session begins with a clear definition of "stewardship" and then explores both its relational aspect and biblical foundation. Through group discussion and assignments, participants will gain ideas and tools to expand stewardship programs and help churches move toward a stronger position of financial sustainability. <i>Led by Mr. Joe Andreana, Deputy Executive Director, Frontier Foundation.</i></p>
	<p>Does Anyone Really Want to Buy a Church? In this workshop, we will explore ideas and concepts on how to be better stewards of our church properties. We will discuss ways that church property can be re-purposed and used to meet community needs in radical ways. We will explore the concept of "mission value opportunity costs" and how our properties are being used to generate income. <i>Led by Rev. Dr. Bill Shillady, Executive Director, United Methodist City Society. (Simsbury only)</i></p>



SCOUT SUNDAY

February 11 at 10:00 am Worship Service

We will celebrate our Scouts on Sunday, February 11
at the 10:00 am Service.



All are welcome and encouraged to join the Congregational Meal
hosted by Troop 88 after the service.

Serena Circle Book Group: Monday, February 12

All are invited to join a new book study group. We meet once a month weather permitting. Our first meeting is Monday, February 12 . We will meet at 7:00 pm in Hood Parlor for approximately 1 1/2 hours. The new book selection is Twelve Ordinary Men by John MacArthur. It is available from Christian Book Distributors online or Amazon in paperback. The additional title is "How the Master Shaped His Disciples for Greatness and What He Wants to Do with You". Please read chapter one and share your thoughts and insights in a friendly, fun group. Contact Karen Price with questions at 203-333-1272 or at karen1147@aol.com

Adult Bible Study ~ 2017-2018

A NEW SESSION TO BEGIN:

February 14

"Forward: Journey Toward a Full Life in Christ"

by Nick Cunningham – 7 sessions

Sundays: February 18, 25 March 4, 11 18 25 April 1 (Easter)

Weekly Discussion Groups in Hood Parlor:

Thursdays at 6:45 pm (Faith Circle arrive at 6:15) & Sundays at 9:00 am

Wednesday sessions at 10:00 am to resume on Ash Wednesday, Feb 14

	DATE	CHPTR	TOPIC	
A Way Through the Wilderness	1/7/18	1	No Way Around Wilderness	The Baptism of the Lord
	1/14/18	2	Entering the Wilderness	
	1/21/18	3	Walking with Others in the Wilderness	
	1/28/18	4	Walking with God in the Wilderness	
	2/4/18	5	Wrong Turns in the Wilderness	
	2/11/18	6	Coming Out of the Wilderness	
Forward	2/18/18	1	Moral Excellence	First Sunday in Lent
	2/25/18	2	Knowledge	Second Sunday in Lent
	3/4/18	3	Self-control	Third Sunday in Lent
	3/11/18	4	Endurance	Fourth Sunday in Lent
	3/18/18	5	Godliness	Fifth Sunday in Lent
	3/25/18	6	Affection for Others	Palm Sunday
	4/1/18	7	Love	Easter

There is **no** requirement to purchase the reading materials.

Please contact the church office for information on where to find them,

Taizé

Ash Wednesday, February 14

9:30 am and 7:00 pm



Come and Rest. Come and Listen. Come and Praise.
Come and Give Thanks. Come to Taizé Service.

Eating Lunch Together: Let's Go "Dutch" at Duchess!

Thurs., Feb 15 ~ 11:30 am – 1:00 pm

Are you eating lunch alone? Why not share a meal with Fairfield Grace Church friends every Third Thursday of the month between 11:30 am and 1:00 pm, at the Duchess Restaurant on Black Rock Turnpike.
Come and see who will be waiting for YOU.



Celebrate the Lunar New Year Sunday, February 18 at 2:00 pm

following Faith Circle Worship Service

**Faith Circle has extended an invitation to the Fairfield Grace family
to gather for this traditional
Korean Celebration of the Lunar New Year**

**Please RSVP to Anne in the church office at 203-374-6528 or
fairfieldgrace@sbcglobal.net if you can come!**



Save the Date...

Fairfield Grace Rummage Sale

Saturday, March 3

9:00 am—3:00 pm

DONATIONS ACCEPTED AS OF MONDAY, FEBRUARY 12!

We need donations of clothing, children's items and household goods.

Draperies, rugs, bedding are accepted.

Please do NOT bring the following items: *Furniture, Books, VHS Tapes and Dishes.*

Contact Lee Del Vecchio 203-374-2130

Spaghetti Dinner News

Sat, Mar 10 & May 12

4:45 PM—6:45 PM



Volunteers! We need help in the morning and evening.

You can sign up for one month if that is all the help you can give.

Contact person: Charlene Brauns-Schindler, 203-371-5068 or cbsfive5@gmail.com

Fairfield Grace Annual Midnight Run

Thursday, March 29

Matt Rush: 203-259-1544 or mrush224@gmail.com

*Serving Pancakes, Eggs,
Sausages,
Juice and Coffee*



*Craft Activities
for the Kids*

Easter Bunny Pancake Breakfast

Fairfield Grace UMC

*All Proceeds donated to
Missions of the Church*

**Saturday, March 24
8:30 AM—10:30 AM**

There will be a visit from the Easter Bunny!
Please consider volunteering for this fun event!
Alan Stewart: astewart@ybrealty.com or 203-275-6084

Wednesday, February 14: Ash Wednesday

9:30 AM Taizé Prayer Service ~ 7:00 PM Taizé Prayer Service

2018

Sunday, February 18: First Sunday in Lent

10:00 AM Worship Service ~ 1:00 PM Faith Circle (Korean) Worship Service

All are invited to traditional Lunar New Year Celebration hosted by Faith circle at 2:00 pm

Sunday, February 25: Second Sunday in Lent

10:00 AM Worship Service ~ 1:00 PM Faith Circle (Korean) Worship Service

Sunday, March 4 Third Sunday in Lent

10:00 AM Worship Service ~ 1:00 PM Faith Circle (Korean) Worship Service

Sunday, March 11: Fourth Sunday in Lent

10:00 AM Worship Service ~ 1:00 PM Faith Circle (Korean) Worship Service

Sunday, March 18: Fifth Sunday in Lent

10:00 AM Worship Service ~ 1:00 PM Faith Circle (Korean) Worship Service



Sunday, March 25: Palm/Passion Sunday

10:00 AM Worship Service ~ 1:00 PM Faith Circle (Korean) Worship Service

Thursday, March 29: Maundy Thursday

7:30 PM Worship Service with Communion

Friday, March 30: Good Friday Cantata

7:30 PM Cantata Service

Sunday, April , Easter Sunday

10:00 AM Worship Service w/communion

1:00 PM Faith Circle (Korean) Worship Service



Cancellations due to Weather

In the case of hazardous weather conditions, it may be necessary for the church to cancel building activities or services.

The decision to close the church on Sunday mornings will be made as early as possible, but no later than 7:00 AM.

We will send an email alert to members when a decision is made. In addition, any closures will be posted on Channel 12 News, News 8 and NBC Connecticut.

Submissions to Bulletin Announcements and Friday e-News

All submissions are due to the church office at fairfieldgrace@sbcglobal.net by Tuesday at noon for that week's editions. Thank you!

Deadline for the March Issue of the Quester is Tues., February 20



WESLEY CIRCLE

Please join the men of Fairfield Grace on the **First Thursday of the Month at 10:00 am**

There are often speakers and lively discussions, a shared meal or delicious baked goods, trip out to visit homebound members, etc....

***March Date Change: Wesley Circle will meet on Thursday, March 8.**

Remaining dates this year: April 5, May 3 and June 7.

Please contact Wayne Brown with any questions at: 203-549-8742



Young Adults and Families Trip to the
Trolley Museum on Dec 2...

... and Caroling at Parish Court on Dec 17





Breakfast with Santa

Dec 9





Still Have Holiday Shopping Left?



Christmas gifts are a great opportunity to help Fairfield Grace at
NO EXTRA COST TO YOU!

- ◇ Still don't know what to get for your niece or nephew? How about a gift card to the **GAP**? You can buy a \$25 gift card to the GAP—you do not pay anything extra—and Fairfield Grace will receive 14% (\$3.50). It is that easy.
- ◇ How about something for your friend who loves to read? You can buy a gift card to **Barnes and Noble** for \$10—you do not pay anything extra—and Fairfield Grace will receive 8% .
- ◇ Do you need a new outfit to wear to a Holiday event? Buy a gift card to **Macy's** instead of paying with your credit card at the store and Fairfield Grace will receive 10%.
- ◇ Planning a big family meal for a gathering over Christmas and New Year's? You can buy gift cards to **Stop and Shop , Shop Rite—even Target**—and use them when you are shopping for Holiday dinners or decorations. Fairfield Grace will receive a percentage of the gift cards that you purchase.



Maybe you have heard about this program called SCRIPPS that Martha Wood has been promoting - but aren't sure how you can participate?

Martha Wood is at church after the Services to explain the program, how easy it is, answer any questions you may have and get you started!

Here is how it works:

You fill out a form to request gift card(s), Martha will have these forms available for you after the Service on Sunday. You choose the retailer and the amount of the gift card. You give Martha a check with the form for the exact amount of gift cards you are buying, nothing extra. If you fill it out Sunday, you will have the gift cards in your hand by the next Sunday. That is all you need to do.

This list of retailers from which you can choose is 3 pages long! Martha will have copies of the list....there is a list on the hallway bulletin board....stop by the office and pick up a list, as well.

We are hoping that church members will use this opportunity to make their gifts really count this season. You can support your church financially and not have to spend anything extra. Please, give it a try!





SILENCE
SOLITUDE
SOLIDARITY
SERVICE

CONTEMPLATIVE OUTREACH®

For information and resources:

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THE METHOD OF CENTERING PRAYER THE PRAYER OF CONSENT

Thomas Keating



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The Guidelines

1. Choose a sacred word as the symbol of your intention to consent to God's presence and action within.
2. Sitting comfortably and with eyes closed, settle briefly and silently introduce the sacred word as the symbol of your consent to God's presence and action within.
3. When engaged with your thoughts,* return ever-so-gently to the sacred word.
4. At the end of the prayer period, remain in silence with eyes closed for a couple of minutes.

**thoughts include body sensations, feelings, images, and reflections*

Centering Prayer Guidelines

I. Choose a sacred word as the symbol of your intention to consent to God's presence and action within.

- The sacred word expresses our intention to consent to God's presence and action within.
- The sacred word is chosen during a brief period of prayer to the Holy Spirit. Use a word of one or two syllables, such as: God, Jesus, Abba, Father, Mother, Mary, Amen. Other possibilities include: Love, Listen, Peace, Mercy, Let Go, Silence, Stillness, Faith, Trust.
- Instead of a sacred word, a simple inward glance toward the Divine Presence, or noticing one's breath may be more suitable for some persons. The same guidelines apply to these symbols as to the sacred word.
- The sacred word is sacred not because of its inherent meaning, but because of the meaning we give it as the expression of our intention to consent.
- Having chosen a sacred word, we do not change it during the prayer period because that would be engaging thoughts.

II. Sitting comfortably and with eyes closed, settle briefly and silently introduce the sacred word as the symbol of your consent to God's presence and action within.

- "Sitting comfortably" means relatively comfortably so as not to encourage sleep during the time of prayer.
- Whatever sitting position we choose, we keep the back straight.

- We close our eyes as a symbol of letting go of what is going on around and within us.
- We introduce the sacred word inwardly as gently as laying a feather on a piece of absorbent cotton.
- If we fall asleep, we simply continue the prayer upon awakening.

III. When engaged with your thoughts, return ever-so-gently to the sacred word.

- "Thoughts" is an umbrella term for every perception, including body sensations, sense perceptions, feelings, images, memories, plans, reflections, concepts, commentaries, and spiritual experiences.
- Thoughts are an inevitable, integral and normal part of Centering Prayer.
- By "returning ever-so-gently to the sacred word" a minimum of effort is indicated. This is the only activity we initiate during the time of Centering Prayer.
- During the course of Centering Prayer, the sacred word may become vague or disappear.

IV. At the end of the prayer period, remain in silence with eyes closed for a couple of minutes.

- The additional two minutes enables us to bring the atmosphere of silence into everyday life.
- If this prayer is done in a group, the leader may slowly recite a prayer, such as the Lord's Prayer, while the others listen.

Some Practical Points

1. The minimum time for this prayer is 20 minutes. Two periods are recommended each day, one first thing in the morning and the other in the afternoon or early evening. With practice the time may be extended to 30 minutes or longer.
2. The end of the prayer period can be indicated by a timer which does not have an audible tick or loud sound when it goes off. There is a free Centering Prayer mobile app timer available.
3. Possible physical symptoms during the prayer:
 - We may notice slight pains, itches, or twitches in various parts of the body or a generalized sense of restlessness. These are usually due to the untying of emotional knots in the body.
 - We may notice heaviness or lightness in our extremities. This is usually due to a deep level of spiritual attentiveness.
 - In all cases we pay no attention and ever-so-gently return to the sacred word.
4. The principal fruits of Centering Prayer are experienced in daily life and not during the prayer period.
5. Centering Prayer familiarizes us with God's first language which is SILENCE.

Points for Further Development


1. During the prayer period, various kinds of thoughts may arise:
 - Ordinary wanderings of the imagination or memory.
 - Thoughts and feelings that give rise to attractions or aversions.
 - Insights and psychological breakthroughs.
 - Self-reflections such as, "How am I doing?" or, "This peace is just great!"
 - Thoughts and feelings that arise from the unloading of the unconscious.
 - When engaged with any of these thoughts return ever-so-gently to the sacred word.
2. During this prayer we avoid analyzing our experience, harboring expectations, or aiming at some specific goal such as:
 - Repeating the sacred word continuously.
 - Having no thoughts.
 - Making the mind a blank.
 - Feeling peaceful or consoled.
 - Achieving a spiritual experience.

Ways to Deepen Our Relationship with God

1. Practice two 20-30 minute periods of Centering Prayer daily.
2. Listen to the Word of God in Scripture and study *Open Mind, Open Heart*.
3. Visit our website to access various online resources, practices, courses and groups.
4. Join a weekly Centering Prayer Group.
 - It encourages the members of the group to persevere in their individual practices.
 - It provides an opportunity for further input on a regular basis through multi-media resources and discussion.
 - It offers an opportunity to support and share the spiritual journey.

What Centering Prayer Is and Is Not

- It is not a technique but a way of cultivating a deeper relationship with God.
- It is not a relaxation exercise but it may be quite refreshing.
- It is not a form of self-hypnosis but a way to quiet the mind while maintaining its alertness.
- It is not a charismatic gift but a path of transformation.
- It is not a para-psychological experience but an exercise of faith, hope and selfless love.
- It is not limited to the "felt" presence of God but is rather a deepening of faith in God's abiding presence.
- It is not reflective or spontaneous prayer, but simply resting in God beyond thoughts, words, and emotions.



Be still and know that I am God.

PSALM 46:10

Contemplative Prayer

We may think of prayer as thoughts or feelings expressed in words. But this is only one expression. In the Christian tradition contemplative prayer is considered to be the pure gift of God. It is the opening of mind and heart — our whole being — to God, the Ultimate Mystery, beyond thoughts, words, and emotions. Through grace we open our awareness to God whom we know by faith is within us, closer than breathing, closer than thinking, closer than choosing, closer than consciousness itself.

Centering Prayer

Centering Prayer is a method designed to facilitate the development of contemplative prayer by preparing our faculties to receive this gift. It presents ancient Christian wisdom teachings in an updated form. Centering Prayer is not meant to replace other kinds of prayer; rather it casts a new light and depth of meaning on them. It is at the same time a relationship with God and a discipline to foster that relationship. This method of prayer is a movement beyond conversation with Christ to communion with him.

Theological Background

The source of Centering Prayer, as in all methods leading to contemplative prayer, is the indwelling Trinity: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The focus of Centering Prayer is the deepening of our relationship with the living Christ. It tends to build communities of faith and bond the members together in mutual friendship and love.

The Root of Centering Prayer

Listening to the word of God in Scripture (*Lectio Divina*) is a traditional way of cultivating friendship with Christ. It is a way of listening to the texts of Scripture as if we were in conversation with Christ and he were suggesting the topics of conversation. The daily encounter with Christ and reflection on his word leads beyond mere acquaintanceship to an attitude of friendship, trust, and love. Conversation simplifies and gives way to communing. Gregory the Great (6th century) in summarizing the Christian contemplative tradition expressed it as “resting in God.” This was the classical meaning of contemplative prayer in the Christian tradition for the first sixteen centuries.

Wisdom Saying of Jesus

Centering Prayer is based on the wisdom saying of Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount: “When you pray, go to your inner room, close the door and pray to your Father in secret. And your Father, who sees in secret, will reward you” (MT 6:6). It is also inspired by writings of major contributors to the Christian contemplative heritage including John Cassian, the anonymous author of *The Cloud of Unknowing*, Francis de Sales, Teresa of Avila, John of the Cross, Thérèse of Lisieux, and Thomas Merton.



THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

NEW YORK EPISCOPAL AREA

20 Soundview Avenue
White Plains, NY 10606

THOMAS J. BICKERTON
RESIDENT BISHOP

ROBERT M. WALKER
ASSISTANT TO THE BISHOP

December 2017

20 Soundview Ave.
White Plains, NY
10606

Dear Fairfield-Grace UMC,

Over the past several months our world has endured the ravaging effects of hurricanes, earthquakes, and fires. These drastic events have changed people's lives for years to come.

On behalf of the people of Puerto Rico and the US Virgin Islands, the people of Texas, Florida and California, and the people of the Caribbean and Mexico, I want to thank you for your generous support through both UMCOR and the New York Conference. Your offering, combined with the offerings of other churches and individuals throughout the Annual Conference, have gone to provide immediate relief to affected individuals and communities. Your support will provide for materials and supplies for our volunteer teams for a recovery effort that will last for years to come. Your support will allow us, through UMCOR and Volunteers in Mission, to be present in these recovery efforts long after others have moved on. This is a hallmark of who and what we are as United Methodists.

I have just recently returned from Puerto Rico as a part of an UMCOR Team to evaluate the needs and help the leadership there to find focus and hope. The need there is tremendous. The role that our church can, should, and will play is essential. Your gift enables us to continue the work that not only rebuilds buildings but rebuilds lives as well. The hope we provide plays a major role in sustaining these people as they recover and heal.

In response to hurricanes Irma and Maria, Bishop Ortiz of Puerto Rico said, ***"In times like this, the church has to rise up and provide hope."*** That is exactly what our offerings, volunteering, and prayers are doing.

Thank you for your gift of \$512 to Disaster Response Ministry. It is going to help meet a very real need. God bless you.

The Journey Continues,

Peace & Joy,

Thomas J. Bickerton
Resident Bishop

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February 2018



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
28	29	30	31	1	2	3
				10am - Wesley's 6pm - Troop 88 6:15pm - Bible		7pm - Troop 88 PLC
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
COMMUNION 9am - Adult Bible 9:15am - Chancel 10am - Worship 11am - Treble Choir	7:30pm - Alanon, 10am - Visit 7:30pm - Handbell	9:30am - Gather in 7pm - Troop 88 Boy 7pm - Trustees, 7:30pm - AA, Youth	6:15pm - Bible 6:45pm - Bible 7pm - Rainy Alley 7pm - FA, Youth 7:30pm - Chancel	Photos for Pictorial Directory, Tremayne 9:30am - Brass 5:30pm - Pizza and		
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
Photos for Pictorial	Tag Sale storage, Tremayne					
CONNECTIONAL/SCO HYMN SING SUNDAY 9am - Adult Bible 9:15am - Treble 10am - Worship 11am - Confirmation 11:15am - Ushers	7pm - Serena's Book 7:30pm - Alanon, 10am - Visit 7:30pm - Handbell	Valentine's Day 9:30am - Ash Wed 10am - Bible Study 7pm - Taizé Service 7pm - Troop 88 Boy 7:30pm - AA, Youth 7:30pm - Finance	9am - MNS, HP, 11:30am - Go Dutch 6:15pm - Bible 6:45pm - Bible 7pm - Rainy Alley, 7pm - FA, Youth 7:30pm - Chancel	5pm - "exuberant" 7:30pm - Troop 88		
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
Tag Sale storage, Tremayne						
9am - Adult Bible 9am - Bell Choir 10am - Confirmation 10am - Worship 11am - Treble Choir 1pm - Faith Circle	Presidents' Day 7:30pm - Alanon, 10am - Visit	9:30am - Gather in 10am - Bible Study 7pm - Centering 7pm - Troop 88 Boy 7:30pm - AA, Youth 7:40pm - Church	9am - MNS music, 10am - Clergy 6:15pm - Bible 6:45pm - Bible 7pm - Rainy Alley, 7pm - FA, Youth	9am - MNS music, Tentative Music		
25	26	27	28	1	2	3
Tag Sale storage, Tremayne						
HEALING TIME MISSION SUNDAY 9am - Adult Bible 9:15am - Chancel 10am - Worship	7pm - Scout Leaders 7:30pm - Alanon, 10am - Visit 12pm - Staff 7:30pm - Handbell	FH for Tag Sale 9:30am - Gather in 10am - Bible Study 7pm - Troop 88 Boy 7:30pm - AA, Youth				